1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

674 754 823

I do not in any way emphasize it, but it seems to me curious that many crimes connected with sorcery are associated with water; they are performed on the banks of ponds or rivers and in several instances the body has been thrown into the water afterwards. Does a murderer who has killed a sorcerer believe that there is some spiritual antiseptic for him in throwing his victim's body into water?

IV

841

Grigson has studied in detail the custom of the Hill Marias in regard to menstruation, pregnancy and birth, but his notes on the Bison-horn Marias need, as he says, 'considerable supplementing'. The Bison-horn Marias have the curious belief that men, not women, were originally subject to a menstrual period. They used to tie hollow bamboos to their organs to catch the discharge. Once—according to one legend—a girl was laughing at a man in this distressing and inconvenient condition, and he lost his temper and threw the bamboo at her; in another story a sister wanted to help her brother, who could not cut his clearing properly on account of the bamboo tagged on in front of him, and offered to take it instead.

841 826

Yet other legends ascribe the origin of menstruation to a wound. There were formerly teeth in the vagina and when these were removed, the wound was not wholly healed. Once the vagina was in the crick of the leg behind the knee—you can still see its shape—but a hen pecked at it and the frightened organ jumped for safety to its hiding-place between the thighs. But it was hurt and it still bleeds every month at the recollection.

841

All the Gond tribes are very strict about the menstrual taboos, in this contrasting sharply with the Orissa Bondos, Gadabas, and Saoras, who are at a similar stage of culture and live not very far away. Grigson has described the extreme rigorism of the Hill Marias and has rightly suggested that the Bison-horn Marias are somewhat less apprehensive of the dangers of menstruation. But they too, like the Murias and the Gonds generally, are strict enough in their application of the taboo and breach of it may be punished by the Departed through the bite of a snake or the destruction of the harvest. They do not usually build special menstruation huts, but sometimes where there is a girls' dormitory, menstruating women sleep on one side of the hut and unmarried girls on the other. In such villages, no married woman may go near the dormitory nor should youths enter it. Not all dormitories however are used in this way.

841 881

Elsewhere part of the veranda of the ordinary living-house is screened off or a little hut is built in the compound for the use of

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

000 would condemn the savagery of the Maria, however, would do well to ponder Michael Angelo's painting of the Last Judgement which portrays those who have died in lust being dragged down to hell by demons clinging to their private parts.

Page 235. Koppers ('India and Dual Organization', *Acta Tropica*, Vol. I, No. 1-2, 1944, pp. 89ff.) discusses the problem of a dual classification among the Marias. He rightly emphasizes that the 'dual division of the Gonds of Bastar has nothing whatever to do with dual classification in the ethnological sense'; in any case, though there is a dual division of Marias, there is no dual division of the Gonds of Bastar who fall into several groups. Russell believed that he had found traces of a dual classification system. Grigson denied the validity of this, 'and with good reason', as Koppers says. The fact that the Bison-horn Maria phratries as such are not exogamous, 'taken in conjunction with the occurrence that the Hill Marias have almost nothing to do with phratries, leaves little doubt as to the relatively recent and secondary character of phratry organization among the Gonds of Bastar. We cannot do otherwise than agree with Grigson who refuses to see any connection between a dual classification system and these phratries as presented to us.' On the other hand, the relationships between wife-clans and brother-clans are somewhat reminiscent of 'the triple, circulative organization of the tribe described by Held'. Koppers concludes that although it is impossible to speak with anything like certainty of the existence of dual classification among the Gonds of Bastar and of the Central Provinces, 'it is another question whether in the light of future research some of the fragmentary evidence may not after all prove to be a remnant of a former dual classification system, which, in this case need not necessarily have been indigenous to the Gonds. It is at all events interesting to note that even Grigson finds himself unable to reconstruct the earlier stages of social organization among the Bison-horn Maria on any other basis than that of an "original two-moiety system". From his general impression of all the material to hand Grigson considers himself justified in concluding that all the rest must have developed out of this. For the moment his conclusion can be regarded only as a hypothesis but it is one which may well contain a certain amount of truth.'

Page 258, *line* 31. The custom of pouring water from the 823 eaves of a house is not confined to marriages. In some Bison-horn Maria villages, a girl is given this treatment at the menarche. When her first period is over, the girl bathes and stands below the eaves in front of her house. Her elder brother's wife or, if she is married, her husband's sister or elder brother's wife, pours water

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

over her from the roof, and she has to catch some and drink it. In some villages, again, if a man marries a widow or another man's wife, the woman must stand below the eaves with a *bassia latifolia* leaf on her head. The Waddai pours water and rice-beer from the roof, all over her, and after this she can enter her new home. When Oyami Anda of Bara Harmamunda married a girl for whom a Lamana'i youth had already been engaged, he had to stand with his rival's brother under the eaves of his house for a ceremony 'to make them forget enmity'. Anda's right hand was placed below the other's right hand, both having the palms upward. In front of them the Waddai made a heap of rice and set an arrow upright in it. He climbed on the roof and poured water over the hands of the two men who allowed it to flow down the arrow and over the rice. Afterwards Anda gave a pig and two fowls to the dispossessed Lamana'i as an offering to the latter's *hanal*. Had this ceremony not been performed, Anda—so he believed—would have suffered from a watery swelling of the body. 823 ●

Page 262. Marias of both kinds are exceptionally virtuous in their sexual lives. Venereal disease is almost unknown, except in the vicinity of the few schools. Several old men have assured me—and I believe them—that since marriage they had had no other woman than their own wives. Love-charms and erotic stimulants are not much in demand and are not approved. At Molasnar there was a Naiko who was said to be making some sort of living by selling love-potions to the Marias; he used to administer them in liquor or tobacco and once a woman took one of them she would follow her lover everywhere 'like a pet dog'. But a Maria said, 'If I bring a girl in this way, my store of rice will grow less for such a union is not a yoking of the house of Mahapurub, and the girl will probably leave me after a time.' Vetti Muda of Dhurli described how when he was a young man (he must have been born about 1870), he used to take a regular diet of monkey's flesh. 'As a result I became very strong and active and could hop from tree to tree like a monkey. Once when I was going through the forest a monkey slipped from the overhanging branch of an ebony tree and was killed by the fall. I cut off its organ and roasted and ate it, with the result that I became so potent that I needed four wives at once.' But it is characteristic of the Maria—as against, for example, the ordinary Gond, Pardhan or Baiga—that he should have used the word 'wives'. 832

Page 269, *line* 27. Grigson has recorded 2 Hill Maria folk-tales. In my *Folk-Tales of Mahakoshal* I give 5 Bison-horn Maria, 37 Muria and 13 Kuruk stories, some of which are probably known also to the Hill Marias, for they were recorded in villages 838

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

733 constables, who again may be men of low caste, and they are almost certainly forced at some time to wear handcuffs which is regarded by most Hindus as degrading. A term of imprisonment involves, of course, culture-contact in its most concentrated form, and we need not be surprised to find aboriginal prisoners bringing back from the capital of the State Hindu notions of this kind.

The ceremony, it is interesting to note, bears no relationship at all to the kind of crime that has been committed. For stealing a cow or for the illicit distilling of mahua liquor a man has to undergo the same purification as if he had committed a brutal murder. Even if he is acquitted, the jail contagion is on him and he must free himself of it.

The ceremonies vary from place to place. At Jabeli, where they have had a lot of experience of this sort of thing, the Maria told me that when a man returns from jail he is not at first allowed to enter his house, but must remain outside and the family gives him his food at a distance. He must then go to his Waddai and give him five rupees for some of the water in which his clan-god has been bathed. The priest sprinkles him with this and gives him a little to drink. He sprinkles some of it over the house. Then the released prisoner gives a feast of beef or pork to the village, he is allowed to go into his house, and from that day 'everybody forgets all about it'.

Sometimes the water must be brought from Danteswara. [123] Hemla Bakka, for example, had to get from the Jia water in which the goddess Danteshwari had been bathed. When Doga came out of jail, the Gaita heated a bit of gold in the fire and touched his forehead, mouth, wrists, knees and toes. He dipped the gold in water and sprinkled it over the body. In Pogu Bheji, the priest burnt with a bit of gold the murderer's tongue, the back of his neck and the upper part of his left arm. He made a fire above the gold with branches of the mango, dumar, karanji and mahua trees and sprinkled the hot ashes over his head. Then the people washed him with ghee, milk and haldi water. When he had given a feast he was free of the contagion of the jail.

When Nendi Muya of Dhanikarka was flogged for stealing a cow, he had to sacrifice a pig and a white chicken to Mati Dea, and bring water from the shrine of Lakshmi Devi at